

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

**Chief John R. Batiste**

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**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

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## **Motorcycle Collisions On The Rise**

In the last two weeks, District VII which incorporates Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, and Island Counties, has had four serious injury motorcycle collisions. In two of those collisions the motorcyclists were killed, and in one of the collisions, the motorcyclist was airlifted to Harborview Medical Center.

- On July 26, a 23-year-old male motorcyclist was killed when his motorcycle slammed into the back of a SUV on I-5 at Mile Post 213.
- On July 31, a 58-year-old female was killed on State Route 2 at Mile Post 61, when her motorcycle went off the road and she was ejected.
- On August 6, a 22-year-old male was injured on I-5 at Bow Hill Road when his motorcycle went off the road to the left striking a guard rail. He was ejected off the motorcycle.
- On August 6, a 57-year-old male motorcyclist was critically injured on State Route 542 when his motorcycle when off the road and struck a guardrail.

Since 1994, motorcycle fatalities in Washington State have almost doubled. Since 1999, motorcycle registrations are up 60 percent, yet motorcycle fatalities for that same time period are up 89 percent. The vast majority of the motorcycle fatalities involve only the motorcyclist, and are occurring during the daytime in good weather conditions. The major causes are speed, driving while impaired and lane travel violations. Thirty-six percent of the motorcyclist killed had no motorcycle endorsement.

All of the above motorcycle collisions confirm these statistics. All of the collisions were caused by the motorcyclist and their inability to safely operate the motorcycle. Three of the collisions were caused by lane travel violations (the inability of the motorcyclist to keep their vehicle in the lane of travel), and one was caused by excessive speed. Three of the collisions occurred during the middle of the day in excellent weather conditions and involved no other vehicles except for the motorcyclist.

“People need to know that driving a motorcycle is much different than driving a car,” Captain James Lever stated. “We are asking everyone that rides a motorcycle to take a motorcycle safety course and to obtain their motorcycle endorsement prior to riding. This is an alarming trend and we will be using all of our assets to address the problem.”

The Washington State Patrol reminds riders that it has a zero tolerance policy on motorcycle endorsements.

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